

## **CHARLIE WESTLAKE 'SPORTIVE' BIKE RIDE (100 km / 62 miles)**

**Organised by Bury Section of the Cyclists' Touring Club (CTC) with Bury Clarion and open to all cyclists.**

You must stop at the Controls. Time allowed: 7 hours.

### **FULLER ROUTE DESCRIPTION**

At 9.30am leave the **Castle Leisure Centre, Bolton Street, Bury** and use the cycle lane to go under the Bury Bridge roundabout and join A58 heading towards Bolton. Very soon, at *Blockbuster Express*, you turn right at the traffic lights on to Ainsworth Rd. (B6196) and ride up to **Ainsworth** (4 km). Through the village and follow the bend right to ride along the rural Arthur Lane and down to **Harwood** village. Go past Morrisons on your left and as you go through the next traffic lights you will see Bradshaw Chapel to your left. Soon the road rises and at the traffic lights turn sharp right to join the B6391. Continue under the railway bridge and go straight ahead at the traffic lights past the road to the Last Drop village to your right. At the **A666** T Junction traffic lights, your way is right to join the A666 in the direction of Blackburn. Very soon you are in **Egerton** where you must turn left onto Longworth Road signed 'Delph Sailing Club'. After a dip there is a long steady climb to **Belmont Reservoir** home of Bolton Sailing Club. Go through the narrow gate and stop at the **CONTROL** at the lay-by alongside the reservoir (16 km).

Turn right to join the A675 in the direction of Preston. At the summit turn right onto minor road signed 'Tockholes'. Descend through **Tockholes** (22.5 km) watching out for the speed bumps until, after going over the M65 motorway which opened in 1998, you turn right at the crossroads at the *Black Bull* pub (24 km).

After a short climb, there follows a steep 10% descent to the crossroads at **Earcroft**. With care, cross the A666 to enter Sandy Lane and continue descending to the mini-roundabout where turn right to go under the railway bridge and begin climbing steeply (1 in 8 - 12%) to **Lower Darwen**.

Go straight ahead at the traffic lights until you reach the big roundabout at **Guide**. With care go straight on following the B6231 signed 'Oswaldtwistle' until reaching the **Britannia Roundabout** and the *Britannia* pub where turn left onto the B6232 and stop at the **CONTROL** in the car park. Descend to cross over the M65 once again and on to the crossroads at *The Crescent* pub where turn right. Go straight across at the **Intack** traffic lights on to the Whitebirk Roundabout where turn right and soon, keeping to the left, join the often busy **ring road** taking great care. There is a shared cycle path / pavement which can be used.

This short stretch of dual carriageway is unavoidable, but once past the various retail parks and as the road starts to go uphill, you must turn right at the second traffic lights signed 'Great Harwood' to join **Whalley Old Rd** and you then climb immediately to open country continuing along the high ground until you descend to **York** village. There is no Minster here, just a few houses and the quiet pub. Once through the village continue descending steeply. This narrow tree lined road has wide views over the Ribble Valley to your left, but you will need to keep your eyes firmly on the road which has speed bumps. At the bottom of the hill take great care at the sharp left hairpin bend.

At the T junction turn right and cross the River Calder bridge to enter the ancient town of **Whalley** (45 km) with its 13<sup>th</sup> century abbey ruins. Whalley has long been a meeting point and centre for cyclists and you will find toilets on the right on entering the town after the mini-roundabout - and shops to buy refreshments.

Leaving Whalley, continue through **Barrow** into **Clitheroe** (50 km) with its famous castle. Follow the 'through traffic' signs to by-pass the town and at the big roundabout turn right following the 'Chatburn' signs. On arrival in **Chatburn** you must turn right at the ice cream shop following the 'Downham' sign. Your way is uphill crossing the bridge over the Whalley by-pass and into **Downham** often voted 'Lancashire's Prettiest Village' where stop at the Assheton Arms pub **CONTROL**. There is a café in the nearby Post Office.

Descend and cross the narrow bridge, turn left then get into a low gear for the hard and long climb beneath the towering flank of Pendle Hill. Once the abode of witches and the source of countless legends and superstitions, Pendle dominates the valley with awesome severity. As it climbs, the road discloses splendid views over the dale, emphasising the unique beauty of this part of the country. You may wish to rest to catch your breath and to enjoy the views and the silence on this lonely road. On finally reaching the crossroads at the summit, turn right and descend carefully on this narrow winding road to go through **Barley** (63 km).

At **Barley Green** the road to the Clarion Clubhouse is shorter by going straight ahead to Newchurch-in-Pendle, but the climb is exceptionally steep and narrow. Our way is to fork left signed 'Barley Picnic Site' and on reaching the next crossroads turn right to soon arrive at the **Clarion Clubhouse** (66 km). (If you decide to follow the steep Newchurch-in-Pendle road you will need to turn left at the Witches Souvenir shop and descend steeply to the Clubhouse.)

At the Clarion Clubhouse, built by the Independent Labour Party in the early part of the last century, you can buy a pint mug of tea very cheaply (but not food other than confectionery) and you can eat your sandwiches and sit on Charlie Westlake's memorial seat and enjoy the view. The inscription on the seat reads:

"Bury Clarion and CTC remember Charles Henry Westlake 1923 – 2001.  
Legendary mile eater and rough-stuff pioneer"

Refreshed, turn left on leaving Clarion Clubhouse to return to the crossroads where you must turn right and climb once again. At the top, follow the road as it bends to the right and you can now enjoy a flat ride with wide panoramic views to your left before arriving at **Fence**. At the T junction, turn right onto **Wheatley Lane Road** then turn right at the next T junction (74 km) on to the A6068. Almost immediately turn left on to Greenhead Lane and descend. After passing under the railway bridge, turn second left on to Windermere Avenue, and at the traffic lights continue straight ahead to join the A6114 signed 'Towneley Hall'.

Continue straight ahead now for quite some time as this road eventually takes you past Burnley Football Club, home of the Clarets, and continues up past the entrance to Towneley Hall. Continue climbing to the traffic lights where straight on signed 'A671 Bacup' The climb now continues relentlessly until nearing the summit you must turn right onto the B6238 signed 'Rawtenstall' Now descend to **Waterfoot** (90 km) where right at the mini-roundabout direction 'Rawtenstall' and stop at the **CONTROL** outside the Co-op. Continue to the next mini-roundabout and keep left to the Tesco traffic lights in **Rawtenstall** where take first left towards 'Edenfield'.

In **Edenfield** (97 km) fork left at the mini-roundabout onto the A680 direction 'Rochdale' and climb to **Owd Betts** pub (100 km) and the finish of your ride. The finish **CONTROL** is open from 2.30pm to 4.30pm. Arrival before 2.30pm will mean disqualification. Celebrate your successful ride with the wonderful fare on sale at the pub or at the nearby snack caravan.